

Turkish pavilion at Venice Biennale

The Turkey pavilion in one of the world's most prestigious art events, the 52nd International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale, which features an installation titled "Don't Complain" by Hüseyin Bahr Alptekin, opened Friday. The Turkish pavilion, sponsored by Garanti Bank, is located in the main exhibition area of the biennial -- the Arsenale Artigliere. Alptekin's installation, curated by Vasif Kortun, the director of Istanbul's Platform Garanti Contemporary Arts Center, is coordinated by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Art (IKSV).

Speaking at the opening, Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş said he was honored to be representing Istanbul in the event. "The Venice Biennale is a global culture platform where cultural policies of various countries are showcased," said Topbaş, adding that Turkish art circles' "complaints" that Turkey did not even have a pavilion in the prestigious biennial were now a matter of the past. He said this year's event was particularly important as the Turkish pavilion was located in the main biennial venue. "Our aim is to make Turkey a permanent participant in the biennial," Topbaş was quoted as saying by the Anatolia news agency.

Meanwhile curator Kortun said Alptekin's installation was drawing a lot of interest from visitors even on the first day of the event. Alptekin has prepared numerous snapshots and short films for his installation, which features a series of rooms connected to each other to form a crescent-shaped row. Each room is decorated in the style of a house and is mounted with an LCD screen that displays a separate series of images Alptekin calls "incidents." Each "incident" consists of a set of videos formed by bringing together a group of snapshots portraying a single place throughout a lengthy period. Each room features a different concept and visitors will be able to sit on the chairs placed inside each "house" to watch the videos.

The 52nd biennial runs through Nov. 21.